AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A steering shaft support structure for a vehicle for uneven ground operation in which front wheels and rear wheels are suspended from a body frame via a suspension and the front wheels can be steered with a handle via a steering shaft mounted rotatably on said body frame, said steering shaft support structure comprising:

left and right pipes composing said body frame, each being formed in an L-shape, and each being provided with an arcuate portion at an upper-most portion thereof,

a cross beam being placed in spanning relation between the upper-most portions of the left and right pipes, the cross beam having a first arcuate portion formed on a center portion thereof;

a front holder having a second arcuate portion formed on a center portion thereof; and

said first and second arcuate portions interlockingly support the steering shaft on the body frame in a rotatable manner,

the cross beam including:

an arc forming portion formed with the first arcuate portion at the center portion thereof and the flat portions at both ends thereof with a protruding wall formed to protrude rearwardly from the upper edge of the first arcuate portion,

left and right front mount portions formed, respectively, at lower portions of the flat portions for mounting the cross beam on the respective left and right pipes composing the body frame, and

side mount portions bent rearwardly from outer lateral edges of the flat portions and mounted on the body frame.

2. (Original) The steering shaft support structure for a vehicle for uneven ground operation according to claim 1, wherein said cross beam comprises a tank support portion for supporting a fuel tank.

3. (Original) The steering shaft support structure for a vehicle for uneven ground operation according to claim 1, and further including a bushing mounted on said cross beam for rotatably mounting the steering shaft relative to the cross beam.

4. (Previously Presented) A steering shaft support structure for a vehicle for uneven ground operation in which front wheels and rear wheels are suspended from a body frame via a suspension and the front wheels can be steered with a handle via a steering shaft mounted rotatably on said body frame, said steering shaft support structure comprising:

a cross beam being placed in spanning relation between left and right pipes composing said body frame, the cross beam having a first arcuate portion formed on a center portion thereof;

a front holder having a second arcuate portion formed on a center portion thereof; and

said first and second arcuate portions interlockingly support the steering shaft on the body frame in a rotatable manner, wherein said cross beam is formed by bend molding a plate material into a configuration that includes a pair of flat portions, side mount portions extending rearwardly from outer lateral edges of the flat portions, and rear mount portions extending inwardly from the side mount portions.

5. (Previously Presented) The steering shaft support structure for a vehicle for uneven ground operation according to claim 4, wherein the front holder is formed by press molding and being provided with an arc forming portion formed with the second arcuate portion at the center portion thereof.

6. (Previously Presented) The steering shaft support structure for a vehicle for uneven ground operation according to claim 5, the front holder further including flat portions extending from both ends thereof and a protruding peripheral portion extending forwardwardly for enhancing the rigidity of the front holder.

7-9. (Cancelled)

10. (Currently Amended) The steering shaft support structure for a vehicle for uneven ground operation according to ~~claim 9~~ claim 1, wherein the side mount portions include a plurality of apertures for reducing the weight of the cross beam.

11. (Currently Amended) A steering shaft support structure for a vehicle wherein front wheels can be steered with a handle via a steering shaft mounted rotatably on said body frame, said steering shaft support structure comprising:

a left support and a right support forming a body frame;

a cross beam being placed in spanning relation between the left and right supports, the cross beam having a first arcuate portion formed on a center portion thereof;

a front holder having a second arcuate portion formed on a center portion thereof; and

said first and second arcuate portions interlockingly support the steering shaft on the body frame in a rotatable manner,

wherein each of the left and right supports is formed with an upward arching bent portion, the cross beam being mounted on the upward arching bent portions of the left and right supports,

wherein said cross beam is formed by bend molding a plate material into a configuration that includes a pair of flat portions, side mount portions extending rearwardly from outer lateral edges of the flat portions, and rear mount portions extending inwardly from the side mount portions.

12. (Original) The steering shaft support structure for a vehicle for uneven ground operation according to claim 11, wherein said cross beam comprises a tank support portion for supporting a fuel tank.

13. (Original) The steering shaft support structure for a vehicle for uneven ground operation according to claim 11, and further including a bushing mounted on said cross beam for rotatably mounting the steering shaft relative to the cross beam.

14. (Cancelled)

15. (Currently Amended) The steering shaft support structure for a vehicle for uneven ground operation according to ~~claim 14~~ claim 11, wherein the front holder is formed by press molding and being provided with an arc forming portion formed with the second arcuate portion at the center portion thereof.

16. (Currently Amended) The steering shaft support structure for a vehicle for uneven ground operation according to claim 15, the front holder further including the flat portions extending from both ends thereof and protruding peripheral portion extending forwardwardly for enhancing the rigidity of the front holder.

17. (Currently Amended) The steering shaft support structure for a vehicle for uneven ground operation according to claim 11, wherein the cross beam includes an arc forming portion formed with the first arcuate portion at the center portion thereof and the flat portions at both ends thereof with a protruding wall formed to protrude rearwardly from the upper edge of the first arcuate portion.

18. (Previously Presented) The steering shaft support structure for a vehicle for uneven ground operation according to claim 17, the cross beam further including left and right front mount portions formed, respectively, at lower portions of the flat portions for mounting the cross beam on the respective left and right supports composing the body frame.

19. (Previously Presented) The steering shaft support structure for a vehicle for uneven ground operation according to claim 18, the cross beam further including side mount portions bent rearwardly from the respective outer lateral edges of the flat portions and mounted on the body frame.

20. (Previously Presented) The steering shaft support structure for a vehicle for uneven ground operation according to claim 19, wherein the side mount portions include a plurality of apertures for reducing the weight of the cross beam.

21. (Previously Presented) The steering shaft support structure for a vehicle for uneven ground operation according to claim 1, wherein front and rear ends of the left and right L-shaped pipes extend downward from the upper-most portions of the pipes, the front and rear ends being attached, respectively, to first and second front cross members which bridge between a pair of main frames.

22. (Previously Presented) The steering shaft support structure for a vehicle for uneven ground operation according to claim 11, wherein the left and right pipes are L-shaped.

23. (Previously Presented) The steering shaft support structure for a vehicle for uneven ground operation according to claim 11, wherein front and rear ends of the left and right pipes extend downward from the upward arching bent portions of the pipes, the front and rear ends being attached, respectively, to first and second front cross members which bridge between a pair of main frames.